

Educational Visits Policy

11/2/13

Context

We believe that educational visits are an integral part of the entitlement of every child to an effective and balanced curriculum. Appropriately planned visits are known to enhance learning and improve attainment and so form a key part of what makes *Buxton School* a supportive and effective learning environment. The benefits of children taking part in visits and learning outside the classroom include (but are not limited to):

- Improvements in their ability to cope with change and novelty
- Increased critical curiosity and resilience
- Opportunities for meaning making, creativity, developing learning relationships and practicing strategic awareness
- Increased levels of trust and opportunities to examine the concept of trust (us in them, them in us, them in themselves, them in each other)
- Improved achievement and attainment across a range of curricular subjects. Students are active participants not passive consumers and a wide range of learning styles can flourish.
- Enhanced opportunities for 'real world' 'learning in context' and the development of the social and emotional aspects of intelligence.
- Increased risk management skills through opportunities for involvement in practical risk-benefit decisions giving them the tools and experience necessary to assess their own risks in a range of contexts.
- Greater sense of personal responsibility
- Possibilities for genuine team working including enhanced communication skills
- Improved environmental appreciation, knowledge, awareness and understanding of a variety of environments.
- Improved awareness and knowledge of the importance and practices of sustainability.
- Physical skill acquisition and the development of a fit and healthy lifestyle.

Application

Any visit that leaves the school grounds, whether as part of the curriculum, during school time or outside the normal school day, is covered by this policy.

Buxton School adopts the LA's document: '**Guidance for Educational Visits and Related Activities with National Guidance & EVOLVE**' (available via EVOLVE Resources). EVOLVE is the web based planning, notification, approval, monitoring and communication system, used by Waltham Forest, to which all staff have access.

The Local Authority's guidance links directly with National Guidance www.oeapng.info

All staff are required to plan and execute visits in line with Waltham Forest's policy. Staff are particularly directed to be familiar with the roles and responsibilities outlined within the guidance.

The rest of this policy explains how visit approval and planning takes place at *Buxton School*.

Types of visit

There are three types of visit, for each of which the approval process is slightly different:

1. staff using the local area to deliver lessons
2. other single day visits within the UK excluding adventurous activities
3. Any visit involving adventure activities, involving travel abroad and/or an overnight stay

Roles and responsibilities

Visit leaders are responsible for the planning of visits but should involve both accompanying colleagues and the children in this process. Staff must make appropriate checks of any third party providers. Staff are advised to obtain outline permission for a visit, from the head of school, before beginning to plan and certainly before making any commitments.

The EVC is *Nick Taylor* who will support and challenge colleagues over visits and learning outside the classroom. They are the first point of call for advice on visit related matters. The EVC will check final visit plans on EVOLVE before submitting them to the head. The EVC and Karen Dearman will set up and manages the staff accounts on EVOLVE.

The Head teacher has responsibility for monitoring and final approval of all visits. At Buxton, Jackie Broadbent-Bowers is responsible for the signing off of trips on Evolve.

The Governors Governors should have oversight of all overseas, residential and adventure trips. No such trips should take place without Governor's approval. The link Governor has an oversight of the Educational Visits Policy and will take responsibility for disseminating this to the Governing Body and for feeding back suggested amendments to the policy via the EVC.

Staff Competence

We realise that staff competence is the single most important aspect of safe visit management and so we support staff in developing this competence in the following ways:

- An apprenticeship system, where staff new to visits assist and work alongside experienced visit leaders before taking on a leadership role
- Supervision by Senior staff of some educational visits
- Support for staff to attend training courses relevant to the role of visit leader

In deciding whether any member of staff is competent to be a visit leader the head teacher will take into account the following factors:

- Level of relevant experience
- Any relevant training undertaken
- The emotional and leadership ability of any prospective visit leader to make dynamic risk management judgements and take charge of any emergencies that may arise.
- Knowledge of the children, the venue and the activities to be undertaken

Visit Planning and approval

The internal school approval process is as follows for each type of visit:

1. Local area visits will follow the extending learning territory policy (appendix 1)
2. Single day visits within the UK excluding adventure activities – these are put on EVOLVE and approved internally by the Head of School (Primary). Visits should be submitted to the EVC via EVOLVE at least 7 days in advance.
3. Visits involving an overnight stay must be put on EVOLVE and submitted to the EVC at least 28 days in advance. The school is required to submit these for Local Authority Approval at least 10 days in advance.
4. Visits involving adventure activities must be put on EVOLVE and submitted to the EVC at least 28 days in advance. The school is required to submit these for Local Authority Approval at least 10 days in advance. Visit leaders must check if an activity provider holds either an AALA licence (http://www.aals.org.uk/aals/provider_search.php) and/or an LOTC quality badge (<http://www.lotcqualitybadge.org.uk/search>). If they don't hold the LOTC Quality Badge then they must complete a Provider Questionnaire.
5. Visits Abroad require detailed planning to commence well in advance and the Head must be kept up to date with progress. Checks must be made on any third party providers and permission from the head teacher to use them be obtained before any deposits are paid. Third party providers who hold the LOTC quality badge (see above) do not require further checks. Those who do not hold this accreditation should complete and return a Provider Questionnaire, which visit leaders should scrutinise. All such trips must be presented to Governor's for approval.
The head will need to submit final plans to the Local Authority at least 10 days before the departure date.

Emergency procedures

A critical incident is any incident where events go beyond the normal coping mechanisms and experience of the visit leadership team.

The school has an emergency plan in place to deal with a critical incident during a visit (see Appendix 2). All staff on visits are familiar with this plan and it is tested at least bi-annually and following any major staffing changes.

When an incident overwhelms the establishment's emergency response capability; where it involves serious injury or fatality or where it is likely to attract media attention then assistance will be sought from the local authority.

The Visit Leaders job list

The visit leader will ensure all the following steps are completed for any type 2 or 3 visit:

- Gain outline approval from the head to begin planning the visit and agree funding mechanism / charging policy.
- Ensure the visit:
 - has clear learning outcomes
 - has activities appropriate to the group
 - is planned to maximise benefits to the children while managing significant risks
 - is appropriately staffed
 - complies with the school's safeguarding policy
- Involve children in the planning of the visit, and how it will be managed, wherever possible.
- Ensure the LA procedures are followed and that the visit plan is recorded on EVOLVE.
- Ensure all other staff, accompanying adults and children are:
 - fully briefed about their roles and responsibilities during the visit
 - know what to do in the event of an emergency
 - are given information they need about individual pupil needs.

Emergency procedures must include what would happen in the event of illness or injury affecting the party leader.
- Ensure the base contact back at school is fully briefed and has copies of all relevant information.

Parental Consent

The school obtains blanket consent, for all local, non-residential visits, at the start of each year. For any visits not covered by the extended learning territory, information should be sent home giving the parents information on the visit and including a request for information on any changes in their child's medical details. If appropriate, staff may wish to use text and / or phone calls home to obtain consent

For residential visits, visits extending beyond the school day or visits out of the Area specific consent should be requested using a letter and tear off strip.

Inclusion

In accordance with the Equal Opportunities Act 2010, no pupil shall be excluded from attending a trip if this decision could be of detriment to that pupil. The school reserves the right to refuse a pupil a place on a trip if it can be shown that this pupil's participation could be to the detriment of other pupils.

Charging / funding for trips

Curriculum areas can decide on how best to fund trips, bearing in mind that reward trips may impact on Departmental capitation. As far as possible, pupils should pay appropriate costs to fund trips and the school will endeavour to keep cost to a minimum (ie using London Transport for free through advanced booking.) Where cases of financial hardship exist, organising staff should seek assistance from the EVC. Costs to be covered should include cover costs for staff attending the trip.

Transport

Transport is to be arranged according to LA guidance. If the school mini-bus is to be used, all drivers must be registered to drive with A.Money and have completed a school minibus driving induction course with R.Hicks.

Use of staff cars to transport pupils – Refer to the LA's guidance document. Any use of private vehicles will be subject to a specific risk assessment.

Insurance

We use the LA's insurance. All overseas trips should take out comprehensive insurance, usually through the tour provider.

Appendix 1 Extended Learning Territory

Boundaries

The boundaries of the territory are shown on the attached map. This area includes the following frequently used venues:

- The Churches on Cann Hall Rd and Woodhouse Rd
- Wanstead Flats
- Cann Hall park and Road
- Woodhouse Road
- Cathall Leisure Centre
- Local Shops
- Leytonstone Fire Station
- Accacia Park

We use this area on a daily basis for a variety of learning activities and staff are allowed to operate in this area without completing the visit approval process so long as they follow the agreed standard operating procedure. Risks assessments for Secondary PE activities such as Cross country / throwing activities are kept in the admin office, and the SL for PE will ensure that all supervising staff are familiar with these risk assessments.

Operating Procedure

The following are potentially significant hazards within our extended territory:

- Road traffic
- Other people / members of the public / animals
- Losing a pupil
- Uneven surfaces and slips, trips, falls
- Weather conditions
- Activity specific issues when doing environmental fieldwork (nettles, brambles rubbish etc)

These are managed by a combination of the following:

- The head, **deputy or EVC** must give verbal approval before a group leaves unless the trip is a regular planned event agreed in advance.
- Only staff judged competent to supervise groups in this environment are approved.
- The concept and operating procedure of the extended learning terrain is explained to all new parents when their child joins the school.
- There is usually a minimum of two adults but this may be one if age appropriate could cope with one in an emergency. For Foundation Stage and KS1 there should be a 6:1 pupil to adult ratio and 10:1 at KS2. This ratio may need to change if using public transport and the trip leader should consult with the Head of School (Primary).
- Staff are familiar with the area, including any 'no go areas' and have practiced appropriate management techniques.
- Children have been trained and practiced standard techniques for road crossings in a group.
- Children are fully briefed on what to do if they become separated from the group.

- All remotely supervised work in the extended territory is done in 'buddy' pairs as a minimum.
- Children's clothing and footwear is checked for appropriateness before leaving school
- Staff carry student medical information and emergency contact details (collect this from the office on the way out)
- Staff will deposit in the office a list of all pupils and staff, a proposed route and an estimated time of return. A school is taken with each group and the office have a note of the number.
- Appropriate personal protective equipment is taken when needed (eg gloves, goggles)

Appendix 2 Emergency procedure

The school's emergency response to an incident is based on the following key factors:

1. There is always a nominated emergency base contact for any visit (during school hours this is the office who will be able to contact a member of the leadership team. Out of office hours this contact should be the EVC / and or Heads of School (primary and Secondary).
2. This nominated base contact will either be an experienced member of the senior management team or will be able to contact an experienced senior manager.
3. The visit leadership team and the emergency base contact will both have relevant medical and emergency contact information on all the trip participants (including staff).
4. Both the visit leader(s) and the base contact know to request support from the local authority in the event that an incident overwhelms the establishment's emergency response capability; involves serious injury or fatality or where it is likely to attract media attention.
5. The National Guidance role specific emergency action cards are carried by:
 - a. The visit leader
 - b. The first point of contact (eg the office receptionist)
 - c. The designated base contact senior manager
6. This procedure is tested through both desk top exercises and periodic scenario calls from visit leaders